2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
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Marriages between

621 members of rival partiti are regarded as undesirable. They occa-
[582] sionally take place, but the division of loyalty within the nuclear
[586] family which results often leads to quarrels and, occasionally, to
[593] temporary separations. (The favourite festa-time story of the wife
[538] who refuses to cook for her husband because he belongs to the other partit is based on fact!) Of the marriages contracted within Farrug, 72 per cent took place between members of the same partit. Children of mixed marriages support the feast of their favourite parent: boys normally follow their fathers and girls their mothers.

578- I recorded only two cases in Farrug of adults who changed
621 their partit affiliation. Both occurred over fifty years ago. A leading member of the St. Roque partit left it after a heated quarrel with Dun Rokku over the design for new street decorations. He subsequently became one of the other partit's most honoured members, and even wrote a book on the life of St. Martin. The second man left St. Roque when he married the daughter of the president of the St. Martin club. I was told that the girl's father had insisted on the change before he gave his consent to the marriage. The young man went on to become president of the club, as did his only son. In another village a few young men left their partit after a quarrel with one of the leaders, but all returned after a year.

621 Although an outsider who marries into a village generally supports the partit of his spouse, a few of them, particularly the men, succeed in remaining neutral. Of the 122 outsiders who married into Farrug,[1] 28 per cent of the men but only 8 per cent of the women remained uncommitted. A few even chose to support partiti opposed to those of their spouses. Thus a women from Qrendi who married a St. Martin supporter and moved to Farrug became a follower of St. Roque because she had been a keen member of the secondary partit in her native village. Children of families in which one of the parents is an outsider, especially if the parent remains neutral, often support the partit of their friends rather than those of their parents or siblings. A case in point is that of the president of the St. Roque club, and his brother. Their father was an outsider who, because of his position as headmaster, made a point of remaining strictly neutral. Though his wife was from a St. Martin family, one son supported St. Martin, the other St. Roque.

[162] [1] 61 men and 61 women. These marriages represent 34 per cent of the total in the village.

197 214 of Maltese, with its semitic sub-strata and immense Italian and other European accretions, have attracted much attention among students of comparative linguistics abroad.

The circulation of the Maltese daily "Il-Berqa" (B/55) reflects the position in the Islands, being limited to the working and rural classes. Many periodicals of a religious or occupational nature, or those produced by some towns and villages, now appear in Maltese; others are bi-lingual. [191] [198] But a knowledge of English is now so widespread among the younger generation that one would expect it to consolidate its growing importance as the language of government, education and culture, with the use of written Maltese declining relatively - though growing in absolute terms with the extension of literacy.

197 538 113 [217] Maltese language fiction and poetry exists today along with a great deal of religious writing. The present bibliography makes no attempt to cover this field although several of the Maltese writers concerned do appear in the general list (Part 8), while the principal store-houses of Maltese literature, the Royal Malta Library (B/16) and the Royal University (B/17), and others, are mentioned in Part 1. Neither is any systematic coverage attempted of the wealth of material concerning the Knights Hospitallers and their sojourn in Malta though some of the principal sources are included in Parts 2 and 8.

113 Maps, plans and charts of the Islands are not included. Many of the collections listed in Part 1 contain such items (B/1, 5, 6, 16, etc.), the Naval and Military authorities in the Islands have made surveys, maps and charts as required, while many private individuals have added to the list. Reference to the official 2" to one mile map (Geographical Section, General Staff, No.3859, War Office, 3rd Edition - 1953) is recommended at all points in the present volume. Sheet 1 covers Gozo and Comino and Sheet 2 Malta. For Malta, more detailed coverage is provided by the 6" (O.S.G.S., No.3852) and the 25" to the mile (O.S.G.S., No.3752) maps. A valuable land-use survey in Malta (1955) and Gozo (1957) have provided the Islands' first detailed coverage of this nature (B/5, 336, 337). Also valuable is the indexed and comprehensive 'Malta Street Guide' (B/489).

The bibliography which follows attempts only a very basic classification into eight sections

Part 1... List of some collections of material on the Maltese Islands (B/1 - 17),

Part 2... List of some bibliographies on Maltese subjects (B/18 - 52),

Part 3... Sample list of some newspapers, periodicals and journals (B/53 - 85),

Part 4... Some almanacs, directories and year books (B/86 - 98),

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There is a *Hares*, too, who guards all hidden treasure. 776
If you are a deserving person he will lead you to the treasure; but you must never, on pain of death by strangulation, tell anyone how you discovered it.

There are persistent tales in Malta of a priceless treasure, hidden by the builders of the prehistoric temples. This treasure is known as "The Golden Bull," and is guarded by a most terrible and powerful *Hares*. No one has ever found it because, though some few have been selected by the *Hares* to be led to its hiding place, they have been unable to keep his secret, and he has strangled them together with the friends in whom they have confided.

There seems little reason to doubt that the Golden Bull is [174]
a legacy of the old gods—possibly of Mithra or Osiris—and that the great snake-like *Hares* who guards the treasure is no other than Set, guardian of the underworld. Perhaps the Bull exists, hidden deep in one of Malta's many caves.

There may be peasants who know where it is. Amongst the moor-folk of Devon and the peasants of Ireland there are many who know the whereabouts of the "crocks of gold," buried by the Pixies and the leprechauns; but none would dare disturb "Fairy Gold." So it is with the Maltese peasant. He would be a bold man who had dealings with the "Golden Bull."

From a very tender age the little Maltese will be occupied 538
in learning his Catechism and the significance of the rites and [795]
ceremonies of his faith. Though busied in this way there will be time, in the long winter evenings, for "Fairy Tales." Usually one member of the family will be able to read. If none [212]
can read someone will certainly know all the old tales and legends by heart, and will be expert in the correct way of recounting them. The family will gather round the story-teller and all, from grandmother to youngest grandchild, will listen with close attention to tales which many of them have heard hundreds of times.

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•538 Before examining the shapes which the Old Things assume in the Maltese "fairy story," it may be well to examine the nature of the stories themselves. They are, like our own tales, an essential part of the national culture; but they differ from such classics as Little Red Riding Hood, The Three Bears, and The Arabian Nights. These latter belong to a literature.

[178] The Maltese folk-tale is part of an oral tradition, ever changing as each succeeding generation has added its touch of contemporary colour and disguised some part of the original sense. Of the literature of the early Maltese, if, indeed, they possessed a literature, no trace remains. Thanks to some few patriots like Father Magri, collections of folk-tales in the vernacular have been made, and there has lately grown up some sort of Maltese literature. It is from collections such as Father Magri's that the literate peasant reads to the family.

[177] The educated Maltese are all too ready to embrace a foreign culture, partly from necessity it is true, but also, because expediency has persuaded them that their own tongue, their own national culture, and their own folklore belong to "the lower orders." So for centuries the remnants of what may well be the oldest civilization in the West—linked with the lost Atlantis and with the dawn of human thought—have been left to peasants and to servants. These lowly folk have stubbornly maintained some life amongst embers which may yet be fanned into a bright flame.

The absence of a literature has one advantage. The folk-tales of a literature become standardized. They are, for that reason, no true mirror of the minds of a people. The people "grow up" but the story remains. "Once upon a time" means distinctly "a very long time ago"; but the *D'erba*—"on a time"—with which every Maltese story commences, might well be used equally of something which happened yesterday, last week, or in the days of King Suleiman. So stories which were once fraught with a religious significance have been

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turned into childish burlesques. The battles of gods become the village squabbles of yesterday. Not much imagination is needed to trace, in one such story, the transition of the race from fierce, bloodthirsty pride to easily contented, peace-loving good humour, from the cruelty of a Tiglath-Pileser to the cruelty of a naughty child.

Sometimes in these peasants' tales the tracks of the Old Things are plain; but often they are hardly visible, because the very story-tellers themselves repeat slavishly words, phrases, and whole sentences which are completely meaningless. The story would be incomplete and the listeners would hotly protest were these scraps of apparent nonsense omitted. Who has not wondered who "Marjorie Daw" was? Yet "See-Saw, Dragon's claw"—is definitely not correct, while "Rumpel Stiltskin" will always be "Rumpel Stiltskin."[1] These are probably mere "jingles," put in for the sake of rhyme or rhythm, but they must not be changed. In the Maltese tale the whole essence of the story is often hidden in some such meaningless word.

So the Maltese child grows up, with Mother Church for Faith, Philosophy, and Art, and the strange old tales of his people for literature.

JAHAN

No reference to Maltese "fairy-tales" would be complete without Jahan. He is the child-hero of a thousand unlikely situations. Impish and cunning in character, he gets in and out of trouble with unfailing ease and regularity, circumvents authority, and makes a long-nose at the powers of evil. He is the embodiment of the spirit of mischief in the character of the race; but his adventures are almost all of comparatively recent importation. He is Ali-Baba, Aladdin, Baron Munchausen, a lovable little fellow, but probably no older than

1 "Rumpel Stiltzchen"—? "Raggle-Taggle Spindlesbanks."

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538 the Arab domination. Jahan is merely a typically Maltese character placed in a series of foreign settings which have been changed to give an appearance of authenticity.

### THE PEASANT AND THE SULTAN

539 From the familiar ground of Jahan's adventures it is a long step to the tale of "The Kaukam and the Kaukama." Here, again, is the typical Maltese hero who, by superior cunning, outwits the "Sultan"[1] who sets him, a poor peasant, a series of impossible tasks, but the atmosphere of the story is of the distant past.

> "Upon a time there was a peasant who loved his father as the light of his eyes. When the father became very old and decrepid, the son was obliged to do as everyone else did; he had to put his father into a cave-tomb; but he could not bring himself to block up the mouth of the cave. . . . He kept two holes. . . ."

The son then arranges to feed his father by leading his ewes to the cave, so that the old man may suck their milk through one of the holes.[2]

539 888 It has been suggested that the burial of the aged father who is kept alive and his advice sought is nothing more than a tradition of oracular response from ancestral tombs. Although this is a reasonable enough theory, there seems no cause to doubt the possibility that the facts are exactly as stated. To this day primitive tribes get rid of their aged and infirm members, for obvious reasons. Respect for the wisdom and experience of the old men and women whose advice was sufficiently valuable

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[1] There is no Maltese word for "king," "ruler" or "governor." "Sultan" is used in folk-tales broadly to describe any person in authority. The Italian "re" is rarely used in the true vernacular.

[2] L. GALEA AND MARGARET A. MURRAY, *Maltese Folk Tales.*

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241 823 [171] Husbandmen would still consider that queer operation as a medium of impregnation (*Dukkar*). This strange usage may, however, be traced amongst the *fellahin* of Upper Egypt, where, as Professor Sayce points out in his contribution to the *Cairene and Upper Egypt Folklore* (Folklore, Vol. XXXI, No. 2, 1920, p. 200) phallic symbols are still hung up to protect the melons and sugar-cane. The old Maltese practice of hanging up stones to the jujube-tree may therefore be considered as a modification of this early phallic worship."[1]

The sense contained in these practices requires no elucidation. The horticulturist with his camel hair brush does no better than the peasant with the male carob flowers. The votive stones are a silent appeal to the oldest and greatest of the Old Things, to the All-Father, Giver of Life and Fertility, whose ancient and enduring image, from Drizzlecombe in Devon to the High Places of Melanesia, is the Rock or Stone without shape—the altar of "The Unknown God"—"Thou art Peter and upon this Rock. . . ."

• [538] Traces of this rock-cult are plentiful enough in Maltese folklore. Children who throw stones into a well or into the sea will one day have to gather them up by their eyelashes. The "old stones" (i.e. *menhir*) resent being moved and are, for that reason, twice as heavy as ordinary stones.

751 825 776 "St. Paul's tongue"—a valuable amulet against the evil-eye and against all venoms—takes the form of fossilized teeth found in the ancient rocks. The blessed tongue which preached the gospel of the Redeemer is enshrined for ever in rock, the symbol of the Father.

776 823 St. Paul's rock-cell, in which he is reputed to have lived, has the miraculous property that no matter how much of the rock is cut away its bulk grows no less—a clear expression

[1] Lecture by Mr. Cremona at the University of Malta in 1922.